

Message Text

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ACTION SCS-03

INFO OCT-01 AF-05 ADP-00 SCA-01 L-03 H-03 EB-11 PA-03

PRS-01 USIA-15 /046 W

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R 031415Z AUG 73

FM AMEMBASSY TANANARIVE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5527

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE TANANARIVE 1057

E. O. 11652: DECON 31DEC75

TAGS: CASC (REPPAS, GEORGE)

SUBJ: W/W GEORGE REPPAS

FOR: SCS

REF: TANANARIVE 1037

1. REFTEL PARA 4, DCM CALLED RESPONSIBLE OFFICER (DIRECTOR OF STUDIES) AT MOFA 03 AUG TO INQUIRE ABOUT STATUS OPENING REPPES TRIAL. REFERRED TO MINISTRY'S 04 JUL NOTE STATING TRIAL COULD BE EXPECTED TO BEGIN LATE JULY OR EARLY AUGUST, SAVE FOR DILATORY MANEUVERS ON PART REPPAS AND ASSOCIATES.

2. DIRECTOR OF STUDIES PROMISED MAKE EARLY INQUIRY TO PROCUR-
EUR GENERAL AND TO REPORT RESULTS ASAP TO EMBASSY. DIRECTOR
THEN TOOK IN ITIATIVE TO MENTION OTHER MINISTRY NOTE OF 17 JUL IN
WHICH EMBASSY HAD BEEN ASSURED TMAT CONSOFF COULD ATTEND TRIAL
SESSIONS SINCE THEY ARE OPEN TO PUBLIC. DCM THEN REMINDED HIM
THAT SAME NOTE CONTAINED PARAGRAPH POINTING OUT THAT SINCE
EXAMINING SESSIONS (SEANCES D'INSTRUCTION) ARE NOT PUBLIC, THIS
RIGHT TO ATTEND SESSIONS OF TRIAL CANNOT BE EXTENDED TO SUCH
EXAMINING SESSIONS. DCM EXPRESSED SURPRISE THAT, UNDER SUCH CON-
DITIONS, NEWSWEEK CORRESPONDENT ANDREW JAFFEE HAD, ACCORDING
TO HIS OWN REPORT, ATTENDED JUST SUCH EXAMINING SESSION ON AUG-
UST FIRST. DIRECTOR WAS PERPLEXED TO LEARN OF THIS IRREGULAR
DEVELOPMENT AND THEN ASKED WHETHER CORRESPONDENT'S ARTICLE HAD
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YET BEEN PUBLISHED. DCM SAID NOT RPT NOT TO BEST OF HIS KNOW-

LEDGE BUT WAS CERTAIN THAT ARTICLE WOULD APPEAR SOON. FYI: JAFFEE TOLD CONSOFF ARTICLE COULD EXPECTED IN ABOUT TWO WEEKS. HE ALSO SAID THAT HE HAD SMUGGLED CAMERA TO REPPAS IN PRISON AND THAT LATTER HAD TAKEN PICTURES TO DOCUMENT CLAIM OF UNSATISFACTORY CONDITIONS THERE. END FYI.

3. DIRECTOR SAID THAT HE WAS CONFIDENT THAT TRIAL WOULD BE HELD SHORTLY SINCE "EVERYONE (AMONG HIGH-LEVEL MALAGASY AUTHORITIES UNDERSTOOD) IS AWARE OF IMPORTANCE OF CASE". HE COMMENTED THAT GOMR RECEIVES LETTERS EVERY DAY ON SUBJECT FROM CALIF. CONVERSATION BROUGHT TO END WITH DIRECTOR PROMISING TO LOOK INTO (A) SCHEDULING OF TRIAL AND (B) ATTENDANCE OF OUTSIDERS AT EXAMINING SESSION WHEN DIP NOTE SAID SUCH SESSIONS WERE NOT PUBLIC.

4. FYI: WE HAVE CONSIDERED HAVING CONSOFF MAKE ATTEMPT WALK INTO EXAMINING SESSION MUCH AS JAFFEE AND REPPAS' FRIENDS MAOUNIS

AND PAPADOPOULOS DID EARLIER IN WEEK. HOWEVER, HAVE DECIDED THAT SUCH ATTEMPT, IF DISCOVERED AND OPPOSED, MIGHT POSSIBLY JEOPARDIZE EMBASSY'S FUTURE LEVERAGE AND, ON BALANCE, HAVE DECIDED AGAINST SUCH ACTION. END FYI.

5. EMBASSY UNDERSTANDS FROM KOPLIN, WHOM JAFFEE INTERVIEWED, THAT JAFFEE IS DISSATISFIED WITH DISCUSSIONS WITH EMBOFFS. THROUGHOUT DISCUSSIONS, JAFFEE ATTEMPTED TO GET EMBOFFS TO JUDGE SUBSTANCE OF AGM INVESTMENT AND MANAGEMENT AND REPPAS INVOLVEMENT. THIS, EMBOFFS CONSISTENTLY REFUSED TO DO, LIMITING THEIR REMARKS TO EMB EFFORTS TO ASSURE REPPAS NOT RECEIVING INEQUITABLE TREATMENT AND TO EMB ATTEMPTS ASSURE LEGAL PROCEDURES MOVE FORWARD OR REPPAS GIVEN PROVISIONAL RELEASE. JAFFEE STATED THAT NORMALLY HE DID NOT WRITE ARTICLES WHICH COULD LEAD TO AMERICAN STAYING IN JAIL LONGER THAN MIGHT OTHERWISE BE THE CASE. HOWEVER, REPPAS HAD REQUESTED NEWSWEEK COVERAGE, HE SAID, AND HE, JAFFEE, DID NOT, THEREFORE, FEEL ANY OBLIGATION TO HOLD BACK ON INFO WHICH MIGHT CONTRIBUTE TO HEAVIER PRISON SENTENCE. EMBOFF POINTED OUT THAT EMBASSY DOES NOT RPT NOT HAVE SIMILAR ROLE AND, THEREFORE, DOES NOT WISH TO VENTURE INFO TO PRESS WHICH COULD PREJUDICE REPPAS CASE IN ANY WAY.

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MENDENHALL

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 03 AUG 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973TANANA01057
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: TANANARIVE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730858/aaaabqgk.tel
Line Count: 108
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION SCS
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 73 TANANARIVE 1037
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 09 JAN 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <09-Jan-2002 by martinjw>; APPROVED <30-Jan-2002 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: W/W GEORGE REPPAS FOR: SCS
TAGS: CASC, (REPPAS, GEORGE)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005